

Ontario Bird Records Committee 2017 AGM

Royal Ontario Museum
Sunday 8 April 2018

Members present: Josh Vandermeulen (chair), Ken Burrell, Paul Pratt, Don Sutherland, Blake Mann, Tim Lucas, Mike Burrell (secretary)

Absent: Barb Charlton (assistant secretary), Bill Lamond

Agenda:

1. Call to order – Josh called the meeting to order at 0936
2. Minutes of the 2016 AGM review: No comments/changes. Josh: motion to approve. All in favour.
3. Business arising from 2016 AGM:
 - a. Mike: eBird account: eBird account has been created (username obrcsecretary) and linked to the obrcsecretary@gmail.com account. OFO members can be instructed to share checklists with this account. Guidelines will need to be written to post on the OFO website, in an Ontbirds post, and perhaps in a spring update to Ontbirds. To be included:
 - i. Required: Real name, description, how similar species were eliminated (in the absence of a photo)
 - ii. Recommended: original finder
 - iii. Josh and Mike to draft and circulate to committee for approval.
4. Third round voting: discussion, specimen examinations:
 - a. 2017-008 Bell's Vireo - 10 May record insufficient evidence (all agree). DAS: not enough detail in 12 May report. General consensus: this species is very hard to identify and perhaps even harder write up good description. In the 12 May report, the bird was seen fairly briefly and enough detail was just not observed. Vote: 0-6.
 - b. 2017-091 Yellow-billed Loon. Tim/Ken: observers were not sure at the time of the sighting. Ken: example from Pelee where a bird looked pale-billed in flight then on inspection of photos showed to be a Common Loon. Vote: 0-6.
 - c. 2017-101 large alcid sp. Very distant. Experienced, very careful observer. Side discussion: should we even review records like this where it isn't specifically identifiable. Vote: 5-1.
 - d. 2017-102 Lark Bunting. Is there enough to accept? Sparse report, but honest. Strong feeling it was correctly identified – right time, right habitat. Vote: 3-3.
 - e. 2017-108 Mississippi Kite – good report, but Ontbirds post casts a lot of doubt about whether enough was observed on the bird at the time of the sighting. Vote: 2-4.
 - f. 2017-120 Slaty-backed Gull. Mike; sent record for review by Alvaro Jaramilo and Amar Ayash; both said SBGU and said it looked like Michigan bird. Blake: showed photo of Michigan bird. Vote: 6-0.
 - g. 2017-178 Barnacle Goose: Tim: not enough details for ID or origin. Group: ID isn't good enough. Vote: 0-6.
5. Additional third round record business:

- a. 2017-010 White Wagtail – subspecies determination (outside opinions sourced by Ken). All: agree on subspecies (yarellii). Great record. Should be written up – in NAB or Ontario Birds. Vote: 6-0.
 - b. 2017-032/033 Brown Pelican - combine the two records? Discussion: OBRC usually takes conservative approach. But this individual was seen next day, not very far away, for a bird that travels long distance. Vote 6-0 in favour of lumping.
 - c. 2017-049 Fork-tailed Flycatcher - accept report on 25th? Report on 25th reported only by a single observer. Pretty hard bird to misidentify. Vote: 6-0 in favour of keeping the record on the 25th.
 - d. 2017-131/151 Northern Gannet – combine the two records? Mike Tate thought there was something on the wing that was similar between birds. Other committee members couldn't see this. Very distant locations. Vote: 6-0 to keep records split.
 - e. 2017-135/136 Ruff - confirm how the records are separated. Mike explained the two records. Amazing circumstances and evidence provided by Michael Butler. Vote: 6-0 in favour of keeping reports separated as they are.
 - f. 2017-138/139 Slaty-backed Gull - combine records? Mike: explained the two records. Don: good suggestion but hard to say for sure. Tim showed comparison...they looked similar, quite likely same bird. However, given time passage between sightings and inconclusive plumage match probably best to keep split. Vote 6-0 in favour of keeping split.
 - g. 2017-144 Tufted Duck - should it include 2018 records from Hamilton? Josh: seemed to be growing tuft throughout its stay in Toronto/Peel so tuft could easily be fully grown by the time Hamilton/Halton bird showed up. Never seen at two places on same day. Lots of people looking. OBRC has combined records such as this for this species in the past. Vote 6-0 in favour of combining.
 - h. 2017-146 Western Grebe - keep as one record or split out Durham record? Seen one day at Peel, next day at Durham, then two days later back at Peel. No actual report received for Durham bird (just Ontbirds post). Consensus: split out Durham record. Vote 6-0 in favour of removing Durham bird and considering it as a separate record if it is submitted to OBRC.
 - i. 2017-156 Summer Tanager - how to treat reports? 1 (25 April-27 August), 2 (25 April and 12-27 August), or 3 records (25 April, 12 August, 27 August)? All agreed to split to two records; though seems likely that one bird just stayed all summer. Vote 6-0 in favour of splitting record into two.
6. Previous year's records business:
- a. 2013 Elegant Tern record (2013-078): listing of official dates. Mike explained history of this record. OBRC at the time had agreed to publish dates of entire stay alongside record because the bird almost certainly was in Canada on all/most days and to avoid confusion with other published records even though it was only conclusively documented on certain days in Canadian waters. Ontario Birds editors changed dates without telling OBRC in printed report, so OBRC published correction in following year's report, and updated operating guidelines for how to deal with these situations where birds are along borders.
7. Member motion to re-review records:
- a. Members to add any records to review. Mike explained re-review process.

have refused to pass on data to OBRC. Mike proposed asking OFO board to contact and request data; if that is not successful then contact banding lab. OBRC chair will contact OFO board.

13. Josh: discuss OFO's request for an OBRC committee always present on the OFO board. Josh: OFO board wants someone to share OBRC news. Mike: could easily have it as an annual appointment by OBRC the same way the chair is. Josh: to confirm with OFO that they are OK with a one year rotating member.
14. Mike: change name of operating guidelines to operating rules or bylaws. All in favour of changing to Bylaws as they aren't really guidelines.
15. Division of letters of review for not accepted records among members. Mike: 35 records. Josh will divvy up records among members.
16. Timeline review for Annual Report to meet August issue deadline for Ontario Birds. Mike: should have first draft by end of April, second by end of May.
17. 2017 Bird of the Year voting. Josh (as chair) presented his list with rationale for each species: White Wagtail, Violet-green Swallow, Rock Wren, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, and Anna's Hummingbird. No other birds were nominated. White Wagtail won out narrowly over Anna's Hummingbird with an average score of 62.3 vs. 62.
18. Election of 2018 committee:
 - a. New members (2): 9 excellent candidates were nominated. Josh to contact top candidates until willing members are found. Top 4 based on member voting:
 - i. Barb Charlton
 - ii. Amanda Guercio
 - iii. Jeremy Hatt
 - iv. Bruce Di Labio
 - b. Secretary: Josh nominated Mike. All in favour.
 - c. Assistant to the Secretary: Mike is appointing Barb Charlton and Ken Burrell.
 - d. Chair: Josh. all in favour.
19. Photo: taken by Mark Peck
20. Adjourn: 12:01